John Ko:

OK. Why don’t you find your seat? And we'll begin again.

Dr. Willard:

In just a moment or two more and then we'll open it for comments and questions. The last page on your handout Jesus promises that whoever drinks of the water I shall give him shall never thirst. Now what in the world does that mean? The water I shall give him shall become a well of water springing up to eternal life. Well just try this on you by thirst. I believe he refers to unsatisfied desire I think thirst is emblematic of that Kobe Bryant advertised drink that said Obey your thirst. That was about the time that in Colorado. Obey your thirst. Give us a break. The ravage its unsatisfied desire and its ravages upon people such as the poor woman by the well to whom he spoke. She really knew about unsatisfied desire. And here she was coming out in the heat of the day to get water because she didn't want to have to deal with people around her who knew her.

I don't mean to say it was her fault because after all the unsatisfied desires you may suffer from are the unsatisfied desires of other. But the problem of Jesus is that if you drink of the water then he shall give you what is the water that he shall give you. It is the life of God you participate in the life of God. That's how you escape the corruption that is in the world through lust you
become as second Peter says we participate in the nature of God the life that comes through the New birth once we get beyond the formalities that often plague people who have not really tasted of it then we can understand this with reference to pornography or other enslaving fascinations we are not talking about repressing desire or denying its reality.

We are talking about not having the desire the persons who would change must desire to not have the desires they now have and be willing to do the things on the vim pattern that will eliminate the desire or render it of no influence. Although there may well be cases where medical treatment specialized counseling or Deliverance Ministries are required and I do want to emphasize that there are cases like this where the individual really cannot on their own make any progress they have to have help but that's not true of most people who are entangled with pornography to an extent that they are living a life a hidden life of shame and feeling guilty and worthless and hopeless.

Most of those people can do something along the lines I suggested most people and you're involved with the use of pornography who have not come to the place where they desire not to desire it they want not to do it do you understand the difference but they don't want to be without the desires like people who can't imagine what it would be like not to be angry it's so much a part of their life that they wouldn't know who they were or contemptuous of certain people or those kinds of things their identity is tied up with their desires so a person involved with pornography or wrongly with food or whatever it may be may wish they didn't do what they do but what I'm saying to you and I had one of the things I hope my title beyond pornography gets out is you have to go deeper you have to be willing not to have the desires that you now have now when
you get there you can actually do things that will remove them and I've mentioned some it's so important to understand the difference in the way your vision deals with yourself and with others. For whatever reason they think it's too important to them and that they would be missing out if they did not have the desire for it. So that's where looking to lust as Jesus describes it comes in. Why do people do it? Well in part it's just habit and their body is cued in. So when something comes across their vision they think this is it now actually they can train themselves to wear it when something comes across their vision. They will realize this is an occasion to do something else sounds terribly precious but as a young man in high school I learned that I could deal with that by praying for the person who had come within my vision. So you have to learn to do something else on the very cues that clicked you into the whatever it is. In this case looking to lust are cues now to do something else see that’s habit but you have to think before you'll do that you have to think. I'm not really going to be missing out on something if I don't do this. How can you think that if your desires are obsessed with that you can’t?

So you have to be willing to not desire the things you now desire not enough to say I don't want to do it that's like the many apologies that we've heard from government and religious leaders that aren't apologies. You know there's a fine art now of apologizing without apologizing Oh I'm sorry if what I said hurt your feelings. How about I'm sorry I said it the fine art of evasion.

Anyone who follows the path of VIM outlined above will receive divine and other assistance to step out of involvements with pornography. What that means is that when something like the occasion to indulge in pornography presents itself to them their first thought will be why would anyone want to be involved with that. That's where you're moving why would anyone. Now you
have your vision will have to have changed your intentions will have to be changed and you will have had to use some means before you come to that place and you will look at what had formerly fascinated you as what no. That's where we want to be. That's why the progress of sanctification is a process in easy living. It doesn't get harder it gets easier. That's why Jesus said my yoke is easy and my burden is light. But you have to come to him and learn you'll learn and the learning process is what changes everything. I often use the illustration of Jesus on the cross when he said Father forgive them. That was not hard for him to do. What would have been hard for him to do?

It would have been hard for him to say you blankety blank. Blanketty Blank a blanket blanket you just wait till my father gets his hands on you. That would have been hard for him to do. Why. Because that was not in him that was not in him. See that's what we're talking about changing is what is in us. That's what spiritual formation in Christ likeness does so it's not hard to bless. Rather than curse because blessing is in us. The ordinary person perhaps. When you punch them cursing comes out because that's what's in them. Now you punch them. Blessing comes out because that's what's in them so when Jesus says bless those that curse you. He's not saying get your will all whipped up and be ready now. And regardless of how you feel about the matter squeeze out a blessing. No he's talking about becoming the kind of person for whom blessing is the natural response that's changing the inside.

Well we've said here tonight is in relation to pornography can be generalized with appropriate modifications to apply to all issues of spiritual transformation into Christ likeness both negative and positive. It isn't just not doing things it's doing things also. And the positive really pulls the
weight of the train. Once you get it going the field of scripture Christian spiritual formation is in a is an area of reality that lends itself to knowledge and to practice governed by knowledge that's why it's very appropriate to have an institute of spiritual formation in a university. Where else should it be. Why don't we have one at USC Well actually it started as one you're not getting want to talk about that now? Actually they're missing out on something aren't they but they have been shunted off into this idea that what we do as Christians is not knowledge it's something else.

See that's a part of the picture of the world we live in one certainly understands that it is a field of knowledge from reading the Bible and especially passages such as Colossians 3, 2 Peter 1:2-11 and so forth that field spiritual transformation is a field of play for grace the actions of the Holy Spirit and all of the instrumentalities of the Kingdom of God but it also requires well directed effort on the part of human beings. Grace is not opposed to effort opposed to earning effort is action earning is an attitude so I close with the words from second Peter again add to your faith virtue and your virtue knowledge and you can go on the rest of the way up that ladder in first and second Peter all the way to agape which is what always concludes these grand progressions in the scripture.

All right thank you very much and now we'll have some time for questions and comments I think. Thank you.

[Applause]
Well actually I've already got one to warm you up on someone passed a question. What role does fear play in addiction of any kind. Actually not so much generally in attaining addiction but once you're addicted fear plays a huge role in keeping you there because you become obsessed with the possibility that you're not going to be able to fulfill your desire that locks you into addiction. And so you begin to make elaborate plans usually hidden to support the desire and the whiskey bottle under the pillow or wherever and all of that is well known. And that's the provision for pornography is similar fear also of being found out drives you underground makes you ashamed exacerbates your need for satisfaction. Isolation shame guilt and so on. Another question what are your thoughts on masturbation and the Christians life this is not an easy question to deal with. Let me begin with this. The Bible says not a single word about masturbation. Now I would imagine they knew about it.

Not a single word about it does talk about uncleanness inordinate infections evil desires and so on now it can be done in such a way that it is harmful and wrong. But you want to be careful in coming down on it especially with young people. Be very careful. I'm. I remember when I was young I was once it was thought sinful to have a wet dream and I watched myself and others beaten into hopelessness over that so sexuality is not itself wrong. Sexual feeling is not wrong.

And I just say to you frankly that the bible says nothing about masturbation nothing not a single word and there's a little book called Letters to Phillip and one called Letters to Karen that has one of the most sound discussions of this topic that I think you will find so I recommend those to you whose first ladies first ladies first hello.
Audience Member 1:

I have two questions. One is could you repeat the title of the book by William James.

Dr. Willard:

Just psychology. But it's a he has another he has another book or two that has that in the title. This was just one word psychology to vault two volumes. Its two volumes. And you can distinguish that way. And the chapter on Will is clearly indicated.

Audience Member 1:

Thank you. And then on page two of your handout in the fourth paragraph you say in most cases this will be accompanied by a vision of one's own body as a source of and means to pleasure. It may be that this is prior in time in child development to the pornographic view of women. Could you elaborate? Parents know what that means in child development.

Dr. Willard:

Well children discover their genitals and pleasure is associated with them very early before they have any views about women or themselves or anything else. And so that can develop in in a wrong way and be harmful. But you have to be very careful with it and not be too hard on the child but help them understand and grow and they'll be OK. But clearly genital pleasure is something that comes along very early in both male and female. There's nothing wrong with that. The last thing you want to do with a kid is tell them they're dirty or so. This is you can talk with them about it what it is.
Audience Member 1:
You can help them learn Audience member thank you.

Audience Member 2:
Yes really. Thanks for your ministry. Appreciate. Minister thanks for your time. If you don't mind I have a couple questions. The first I’m not exactly sure how to phrase it as a question. I noticed that

Dr. Willard:
Just make a statement.

Audience Member 2:
OK. I noticed that you were saying that it seems like in some cases there might need to be specialized counseling Deliverance Ministries and so on. I guess for me in my interaction with other men it seems like the majority of them really have some kind of a family issue.

So many of them consistently have serious issues with their with their mother with their father things that happened when they were young. It almost leads me to think that that kind of specialized counseling dealing with that stuff whether it's psychotherapy or whatever that that would be I mean I look at some of these guys and I think wow they'd be good for all of them. I don't know if I'm overreacting and thinking well you know maybe it's not that necessary to delve into all those issues but
Dr. Willard:

Well there's a question of who's available to do it. How can they be helped? I think we should be alert to that. And I'm sure that what you're saying is right is that many people because to see what happens in our families because we are in a fallen world is usually something that breaks our soul more or less. And so sometimes you have to go back and try to deal with those kinds of things. I would just say that in most cases I don't think that's the only way. OK. I think there may be some cases where you have to do that just like in some cases I think you use. I think there is genuine possession involved in some of this and you need to deal with that as what it is. OK. So when we're trying to help someone with this or if in our own case we need to be reflective about all of those factors.

Audience Member 2:

My other question had to do with just physiological aspects of addiction and I know you mentioned something about some folks might need some medical treatment. Is that is that something that you might I guess I'm thinking about how the elevated level of dopamine because of sexual addiction similar to the drug and alcohol high that that folks that struggle with those things get in that kind of something that you would address I think could be addressed with the medicate. Anything about treatment.

Dr. Willard:

Anything that helps seriously. I mean that's why I put that in there because I want people understand look if there's a case where a medical doctor can help or someone who is able to deal
with possession or repression or whatever degree of involvement with spirits is concerned just be alert and open and deal with what is there to be dealt with

Audience Member 2:
Thanks.

Dr. Willard:
Mm hmm. Yes sir.

Audience Member 3:
Thank you Dr. Willard for joining us tonight. My question is about the will and the desire and how are you seem to present them as if they're two conflicting concept concepts. The will or the desire to root out of bad and you talk about love how it is really out of goodness. So my question is it possible that the will and the desire can actually work together or that the desire might drive a will. So can we could we have a desire to actually do to do good

Dr. Willard:
You can and I hope you will. Seriously. No I mean desire is not bad the Christian or biblical interpretation of desire is it is a part of our God given nature and that's why I dragged you through all that stuff about what desire is for it's not bad sexual desire isn't bad now it's also not automatically good see that's our culture today tends to think that whatever you desire is good that's why I talk to you about the cake you know I wanted to help you see no desiring something is a little different than loving it and seeking what is good for it. So that's crucial in personal
relationships especially in marriage and dating and things of that sort is you want to make sure that when someone says I love you they don't just desire you

Audience Member 3:
So there's the difference between love and desire

Dr. Willard:
And so you I'm sorry

Audience Member 3:
There's a difference between love and desire

Dr. Willard:
Love seeks the good of what is loved desire seeks to have its way with what is desired. That's the difference

Audience Member 3:
Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Willard:
So no there's a great confusion you see in our culture about love and desire. That's why I tried to talk about it now desire needs to be subordinated to what is good and it is love that does that I could not possibly love the woman in the picture in pornography and use that picture the way I
do I could not possibly do that so that's why it's so important to understand the difference. The answer to lust is love Yes sir.

Audience Member 4:
I also want to say thanks Dr. Willard. Thanks for being here. OK. So my question has to do with it's on page on page two the bottom of your hand out in the middle of the paragraph you say thus the wrong vision of God lies at the foundation of pornographic practice. Needless to say a right view of God in God's world would have itself break the grip of a life of sexual sensuality. So my question has to do with this specifically but also more generally with some degree of specificity what's the best way to begin to get and to maintain a vision of the goodness of life in the kingdom of God.

Dr. Willard:
Spend a lot of time thinking about Jesus.

Audience Member 4:
So like reading the Gospels

Dr. Willard:
Yes and taking his words into your life into your mind and putting them into practice

Audience Member 4:
And maybe it would be helpful to say something about the kind of reading that you would recommend would differ from the kind of reading that normally gets done.

Dr. Willard:
The kind of reading

Audience Member 4:
That normally gets done. Yeah. Because I mean I've seen a lot of Christians you know read their Bibles and whatnot but

Dr. Willard:
Mostly what not I think.

Audience Member 4
Yeah I agree. So that and the other question is what to avoid. Like what. What are things that will not help us maintain that vision?

Dr. Willard:
Well I think that you know that old hymn called accentuate the positive. Eliminate the negative. I think you go with the positive. It's not so much what you should not read. Read the good stuff master the masters of the spiritual life. Take your Bible and keep it alongside William laws serious called to devout and holy life canvases imitation of Christ introduction to the devout life.
Find a few really dynamite books and keep them with your Bible and don't read little snippets of
the Bible read a whole book every so often and then memorize a chapter and it will get into you
and it will become a substance in you and it will transform you if you do that and some of these
books now they don't fool around. You read William law. He'll set your hair on fire. Because he's
not playing church and he's talking about the real stuff and that can give you cramps sometimes
but just stay with it stay with it and it'll straight now. But truthfully I mean the words of Jesus
you just want to have them in you don't necessarily say memorize them that's good too.

But spend a lot of time dwelling on them and it'll change you because it will change your vision
of God and that'll change your vision of the world and of who you are and of who that beautiful
thing is. That's coming across your scene you will see them differently because you have a
different vision of God. I was quoting some Psalm to someone here a moment ago. David Psalm
16:8. I have set the Lord always before me. He is at my right hand. I shall not be moved you
know the old guy that wrote that he knew something so that's what I would suggest.

Audience Member 4:
Thanks.

Dr. Willard:
Mm hmm. Yes sir.

Audience Member 5:
If partaking of all the proper human love desire and desires won't satisfy the soul and a full complete and deep way. Then what is the ultimate object of love and desire that is needed to capture the soul and necessary for man to function properly. What is necessary for deep proper functioning is the ultimate desire is the ultimate desire of someone other than your spouse.

Dr. Willard:

That last sentence again

Audience Member 5:

Is the ultimate desire someone other than your spouse?

Dr. Willard:

Well that doesn't sound like a good situation. Now. If you turn it towards God that's fine. You should love God more than you love your spouse. That's the only safety your spouse will ever know. But I mean again what did Jesus say? What's. What's the big commandment Love God with all your heart soul mind and strength so that's the center that pulls everything else straight? Now I may not have gotten your question. I'm sorry if I didn't so try again.

Audience Member 5:

That's right. What the question is there something deeper than imagined picture a person not the human soul let's say requires a certain list of object activities for to function properly. Just meet me all its desires properly. But imagine that's not enough. Imagine this something deeper that needs to captivate the soul and a deep complete and full way. And it seems that that is something
other than going to swing transcendental something other than human non-human. And in what way does God. If that's God what way does it God. Should God fill our desire captivate our soul and lead all of our desires.

Dr. Willard:

You know what I'm a little uneasy with that I would rather say you should love God and that means too will what is good for God. That should be. Now if you do that you'll probably wind up desiring it and then desire will be subordinated to love as it should be

Audience Member 5:

Imagined picture that

Dr. Willard:

See we have a lot of teaching in today about passion. And how you ought to have passion. I don't know about that right. I think you can actually reality brings passion. You stick a play a splinter under your thumb nail and you'll feel it. Passion is something that comes in the natural course of life.

In response to love for something good there's too much talk today of passion as something that you just ought to have I don't really I'm worried about that. I think passion will take care of itself. If you take care of love but actually people commonly think that love comes after passion that you sort of get a passion and then maybe love. I don't think that actually happens that way. So I'm afraid I'm not understanding you and I'm not doing justice to what you're saying.
Audience Member 5:

A clear more clear way. It seems that that the ultimate object of our desire should be God in the following way nothing will satisfy our desire the most except for God because what we desire the most is something that we can't have which is we desire the most seem like are the nature of humans in such that we desire a god the most

Dr. Willard:

I don't agree with that myself

Audience Member 5:

And that we should be seeking God the most and that should be the center of all of our desires.

Dr. Willard:

The problem is we don't desire God in my opinion and actually there are some of the ways you're stating that again I'm. You may be right and I'm totally wrong but it sounds to me and I know some people who say these sorts of things that you're actually worshiping desire and using God to fulfill it again I don't mean to be accusatory or maybe I don't understand or maybe I'm just wrong. My wife says I've been wrong. But I'm. That's the best I can do. We ought to love God. There'll be plenty of desire. There'll be plenty of pleasure. That's not where we go. It's like people fall in love with love. Because it has a wonderful feeling. They need to love people not love you know there's even a song falling in love with love and so forth. I don't sing usually at this price. So I think it's just a matter of getting those lined up right. Yes sir.
Audience Member 6:

Two questions. The first is what would you see as the fundamental problem or what's fundamentally wrong with an addiction to pornography. What would you see to be the fundamental problem and what's the answer.

If it's not just not loving. For example the object of the women not the objects. The women you're viewing at. If it's not fundamentally the women like looking at not loving the women you're looking at is it something deeper. And what's the interplay like is it taking the satisfaction of desires in your own hands against what God has commanded or something like that. And the second question is

Dr. Willard:

Let me answer that one. OK. Yeah it's degrading to human beings. Go ahead.

Audience Member 6:

And that's the fundamental problem.

Dr. Willard:

That is the fundamental right. You know it leads to a lot of other bad stuff right. But that's the fundamental problem. I mean just think how am I using myself when I engage in pornography I'm using myself. Well that's enough to curdle my blood right there. Unless I'm just gone on my desires and I'm just thinking oh well I just love it.
Audience Member 6:

Right. I was just wondering if you see some kind of deeper connection to addictions for example in various forms addiction to you know alcohol or violence or different things looking good et cetera. Is there something in common shared by those addictions that is more fundamentally problematic or wrong where the heart of it lies rather than just devaluing

Dr. Willard:

The perversion of desire. That's always what's involved in addiction. The addict is someone who has signed their will over to their desires. So they say I must have this.

Audience Member 6:

It's a miss ordering you know. Thanks. And the second question is I mean I think there's you put proper emphasis and I've read all your stuff I love I love your stuff you've put proper emphasis on our role in you know vim and our role in the transformation process. Could you say more about the role the Holy Spirit what you would see it being. I mean I know you see the disciplines as a means to opening up to the work of the spirit. Is that it or could you say more expand on the role the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Willard:

There are many roles of the Holy Spirit and those conviction speaks to us he tells us to do or not do things he strengthens our will and our resolve he brings things to our minds that we need to have brought to our mind so I don't think you can it or confine you that I mean you want the same way with the Word of God the Word of God the scripture the way it works with these
things it has a lot of different facts and basically it transforms your mind and it enters your body and directs your soul in a substantial way just by being in there. Yeah. So I don't think you can.

Audience Member 6:
Yeah put a formula to it's more of an encompassing

Dr. Willard:
Well it's like you can't tell what do you do.

Audience Member 6:
Yeah.

Dr. Willard:
You're not going to do anything bad that's the only thing you can say. Yeah right.

Audience Member 6:
Thanks.

Dr. Willard:
Yes sir
Audience Member 7:

Thank you Dr. Willard I appreciate your writings very much God has shown me a lot of love through your books over the years and I'm a man who I had surrendered my will to my own desires and I actually came across your first book renovation of the heart through Alcoholics Anonymous I don't know if you're aware of this but many of us in the 12 step community are great appreciator is of your work I'm a great appreciator of their work well so am I so am I am 20 years of guys involved in the pornography industry and I came out of there with a pretty nasty drug and alcohol habit today I work with an organization where we try to help people with integrity issues related to sex pornography lust my question to you sir is how can we better partner with churches I find a lot of interest in talking about this from a subject standpoint but I have a very difficult time finding people to come on board and working with us you have any suggestions for that. Thank you.

Dr. Willard:

Well basically our churches aren't about this they're about something else. Usually it's maintaining something that they identify with their faith and practice and surviving. So the problem is you need to get them interested in this. I as some of you no doubt have suffered from. I constantly point out that until you establish discipleship in the churches they're going nowhere and will often contribute more to the problem than to the solution the way of the New Testament is make disciples bring them into a community of Trinitarian love and presence and teach them to do everything he said but that is not what we do. And forgive me I'm I don't want to offend anyone but just to give an honest if mistaken answer to the question and that is it's just not what we're about in church so changing what we're about in church would be the thing you want to get
people interested in making disciples and teaching people to do whatever Jesus said. I've tried to get churches to just pick one thing and teach their people to do that one thing. Start with something simple like bless those who curse you. I nearly always use that because it seems like its very simple. Simpler than some other things. The thing about this is if you teach people to do a few things that Jesus said where they actually do them they will be so transformed that most everything else he said will just be a matter of pointing it out at most. Sure so that's where the problem lies. The problem lies that we have accepted a form of Christianity that does not require that you be a disciple of Jesus. There it is yes ma'am.

Audience Member 8:
I'm. We've spoken about how the fundamental issue with pornography is degrading humanity. I'm wondering what I've come into contact with is that men do recognize that when they do see an actual woman there is a guiltiness and a shame in having their desires excited and so and we have a lot of men that are turning to animation and I'm wondering about animation

Dr. Willard:
Animation. I don't know.

Audience Member 8:
Yeah like cartoons that are pornographic. Exactly. So I'm just wondering if you would if you have any words to speak to that and how the degrading humanity can actually start with. I don't know like maybe the degradation of the actual person who is you know even taking part in using those images too.
Dr. Willard:

Well I think I think there there's not that much difference because they are actually degrading themselves by using their senses on their body to gain pleasure. That's not what we're here for. We're here to love and to do what is good naturally pleasure. Should a company that unusually does but you're not doing it for pleasure. And so I don't I don't think it's going to help if you're exciting yourself by looking at animated. I don't know. That's seems even a little more weird to me than this. I guess the idea is that it to produce it doesn't involve an actual woman or a person. So then somehow it's better. Right. I think that well I minimally I would say at least that part of it is better.

But actually using it. I can't see that it makes any difference there. Maybe I just don't understand the issues but I'm beginning to think I understand what you're talking about maybe. And it just seems to me that that's going to degrade the person using it as much or even maybe more

Audience Member 8:

And maybe there is a disconnect there maybe that maybe guys aren't seeing that because I think in their mind I'm not sure. They're not they're not seeing that they're hurting anybody else. They're not. And they don't think

Dr. Willard:

They're hurting themselves right. Yeah I got you. OK. Interesting.

Audience Member 8:
Thank you.

Dr. Willard:
Thank you. Yes sir.

Audience Member 9:
Going back to proper vision and who God has created us to be we first have to have a proper vision of who God is. But

Dr. Willard:
That's where it all starts.

Audience Member 9:
And who he has created us to be.

Dr. Willard:
Yes.

Audience Member 9:
And going back before the fall God created us as sexual beings but then he also caused us to be sexually pure. And so I'm wondering how that works with not a hint of sexual immorality and pretty much how to be true to our sexuality without being engaged in sexual actions. So pure but sexual. How do you do that?
Dr. Willard:

I like that. That's good. Well first of all you're gonna be sexual no matter what. You kind of get out of it. Yeah. So that's not a choice. And unfortunately some people who have thought that sexuality is a bad thing have tried to do it that way. And the reports I have on that is it doesn't work very well. So first of all sexuality as such is pure.

Nothing wrong with it. Nothing wrong with sexual thoughts. Nothing wrong with thinking that someone is sexually attractive let's not. Nothing wrong with that. Nothing wrong with wanting to look good have to limit it but still in itself there's nothing wrong with that. It's when that becomes a dominant drive in your life that it begins to move in a wrong direction which can eventuate in fornication adultery and other forms of clearly wrong sexual behavior. So if you are sexually alive and you have thoughts of sex and so on. There's nothing wrong with that. It's where you begin to engage your will to cultivate that for its own sake that you begin to get into trouble and I don't know what you make of this and you may think badly of me.

But I think this point that came up about masturbation that the Bible has absolutely nothing to say about it is a very important indicator in what you're asking about because it I think it indicates you know of all the grim things that have been said especially to young people about this topic none of it's in the Bible. And so I would say as long as you are not engaging in something such as pornography or of course illicit sex of various types then your pure just this one word obsession is what you obsession with something is a good sign for when it's going wrong. Yes sir.
Audience Member 10:

Yes. Dr. Willard I just want to first thank you for your writings. I remember reading renovation of the heart about two years ago maybe three and just the fact that you gave words all these things going on in my life they meant so much to me so

Dr. Willard:

Thank you. Thank you.

Audience Member 10:

And my question is I work in ministry with a lot of people who are sexually broken and that's kind of where I see myself in the future going into this this ministry. And I see guys probably who who've been acting out sexually and just kind of whatever type of fashion for years and years and years and years now and this idea of a vision and an intent is it's such a difficult kind of idea for them to get in their head. All right. I've messed up so many times I have I have you know now in 40 50 years old. And what does it look like now to be to be sexually pure when they don't have you know maybe marriage to look forward to or things like that. Can you help me and in what ways might I encourage this.

Dr. Willard:

Well I would encourage you with people like that and in general with brokenness as you're referring to it and it's become a topic that is common. I would encourage you not to deal head on with that issue.
Dr. Willard:

I did a series that Hollywood press some years ago and basically I just teaching the Sermon on the Mount the Kingdom of God and so on and after one of the sessions young man came up to me after everyone and cleared out and said I'm not straight. What should I do? No I did not say you should just go get straight. You know that's not the place to hit the beach on these things. I said to him follow Jesus follow Jesus become a disciple of Jesus and let things straighten out as you go along and that's what I would say to you in dealing with these people.

I would teach them how to follow Jesus and what that means. I would begin with the fundamental teachings love God with all your heart soul mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself and then come out there whatever their brokenness area that is come to that through the more basic principles and I believe you will find that extremely powerful. Now you're going to have to give them a different gospel than what is commonly heard. You're going to tell them the good news is that if you trust Jesus you can live in the kingdom of God right now that's pretty good news.

And then you teach him about what the kingdom of God is and how it works and watch them and then all these things about desire and will and so and I think you will find begin to pull straight. See we tend to grow at these things legalistic and we just can't succeed with that and you just straight out along this that and the other line and you'll be OK. Well they probably know that if
that's all they got straight they still wouldn't be OK so the advice is I remember the opening
words of that wonderful book imitation of Christ he that follow with me Jesus says I'll not walk
in darkness but shall have the light of life that's where you begin. You follow him. So that's what
I would say.

Audience Member 10:

Thank you very much.

Dr. Willard:

Yes sir

Audience Member 11:

Hi I was just wondering if you had like one. What's the greatest thing you've learned in your life
that you would want to pass on to someone like myself who's young and starting to lead a
ministry. Well what wisdom would you have?

Dr. Willard:

You want to learn how to love and serve the people around you. That's what you want to do. If
you take that as your goal and trust Jesus it'll you're OK. You'll be all right. You won't be perfect
that'll take care of itself eventually. But love and serve the people around you and that will make
you to trust God and pray for him to help you and love him. If you say while just love God
somehow that's a little harder to get to but if you say love and serve the people around you then
that's going to take care of almost everything. That will come up and it will drive you to God and you'll learn how to love God. So that starts now. OK. Tonight. Yes sir.

Audience Member 12:
Hi. How should a significant others and spouses respond when their loved ones have openly expressed that they struggle with viewing pornography.

Dr. Willard:
Mm hmm. Well you should listen. You should not alienate yourself from them. Don't come with condemnation. They've already got more than they can handle it from themselves. For sure. So listen to them. Be sure to spend time with them. Care for them serve them. That's what I would do. Now we're tempted to straighten people out and that is a temptation give up but love them and stay with them. You don't need to tell them all of the righteous things you know you but you do need to love them and care for them communicate with them. That's the thing to do. Now then if this if they are open to teaching I believe you can teach them some things that will help them if they want. As I said in the talk if they want openness with you if they want to be able to call on you to help them be there and you can be sure that if you condemn them they won't want you to help them.

Audience Member 12:
And I have one more question. I've heard several testimonies of men in seminary aspiring to be pastors and elders and ministers and while they were in seminary students they struggled with viewing pornography and they continued on believing that they would eventually win the battle
by God's grace. And they many of them didn't. And they continue on into ministry for several years leading churches still struggling with struggling with pornography. So for men in seminary right now with those aspirations who struggle with pornography what would be the steps to take should they step back from seminary and handle this before they continue on or should they continue on.

Dr. Willard:

No I doubt stepping backward to help them.

Audience Member 12:

OK.

Dr. Willard:

No I don't think that would help them.

Audience Member 12:

So continue

Dr. Willard:

I mean it's conceivable that in some case it might. It would depend on what kind of pressure they were under. And if that would pressure is often a contributing factor in these things not just pornography but alcohol and whatever else you know as we know it's our safety valve we're finding life difficult boredom whatever hopelessness about our future. And so there we go. And
so I wouldn't think it would be automatically what they should do is where they are find people that they can be open with and set up ways of accountability and so on. I would think that if it were possible and they could find a good Christian counselor who understood these things that would be wonderful if they could have a church fellowship that would pray for them and that would be wonderful too. But I wouldn't think just getting out even getting out of the ministry isn't going to cure the problem.

Audience Member 12:

Thank you.

Dr. Willard:

Yes.

Audience Member 13:

Nice to see you. Many of my friends would be honored to be in my position right now. The idea of shame came up in your discussion many times tonight seems to be that that would be a consequence or a characteristic of people who are addicted to pornography and suffer the consequences of it. In terms of research and in terms of the atonement or what Jesus really accomplished by dying on the cross. Who is writing about shame? To help us to understand the differences between shame and guilt and how to recognize and how to be an active healer in recognizing. Shame in others. And how do you deal. Well that's too big of a question. Who's talking about that? Who's writing about the.
Dr. Willard:

Well there's almost a trainload of books on shame now from various points of view. I think probably Leanne Payne would be a good one to mention in regard to that. No one else comes to mind. But I mean it's constantly discussed now. Shame. I don't know that that helps very much.

Audience Member 13:

I'll check her out.

Dr. Willard:

But it is it is constantly discussed and it's a big issue because what shame does is drive you into hiding because shame means I am unworthy. I am hideous I am repulsive I am and so it drives you into hiding. And now the only thing that can really deal with that is someone who is able and has enough love to accept that person and communicate that in a way that they will eventually draw the curtains and be seen they're listening is such an important part of that if you're trying to help someone with it because when you have someone call up and shame not just with reference to this but other things they will check people out and they will listen to their voices and watch their body language and for most people they will sense that they cannot reveal themselves.

And then of course they won't and so then you have these cases famous cases for the newspapers and all of that where you have someone who suddenly someone blows the whistle and there they are and struggling with all of this. And usually still engaged in denial even when they're in the public light. Shame is an awful thing. But the only thing really that handles shame is the man on the cross. He was put to shame publicly nothing more shameful than being crucified in that time.
cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree. So he took it now. That means he has received shameful people he received shameful people.

That's what he did all the time in his life. That's sort of the stories of the Gospels. Some of his disciples were shameful people all of them were from the point of view of those who thought they weren't shameful. So we just had to say at the heart of Christian faith in Jesus Christ and God is openness about what is shameful and receptivity of people he you know remember he receives sinful men and eats with them see he. Now we are in the place of Christ to others we receive shameful people that's more than most folks can handle to tell you the truth.

Audience Member 14:
Thank you brother I have a 13 year old boy who's just discovered masturbation. You said a few minutes ago

Dr. Willard:
A little late.

Audience Member 14:
Well maybe he discovered it sooner maybe I discovered that he discovered it. Oh OK. You said a few months ago and I've read Dr. Dobson's perspective very similar to yours but you said we need to help them understand what

Dr. Willard:
Understand that the stimulation that they get and what that means for their lives in particular that it's not something to organize their days around their nights around and that there are better things that they can be doing. OK. That's the broader picture of life again I've said that so many times not I'm afraid I'm boring you with it but we need to help them not be obsessed with this.

Audience Member 14:

OK. I'm also here with some amazing young guys from college. They're bombarded every day. Yes. It's overwhelming. Yes. Tomorrow morning when they wake up before they go to bed tonight what do what is their mind and their heart need to be set upon as they meet all of them. They are learning to love God as they're progressing and transforming. But tonight tomorrow morning what do they need to be asking God to set their minds on specifically just to get started.

Dr. Willard:

Well there are some things Justin religious devotion that they are fairly standard things but mainly they need to be thinking about the good things they are doing in life. And that may be different kinds of things but they need to be able to devote their lives to good things. And of course if they are Christians they will be able to see that under the Kingdom of God but it's positive. Goods that save you from negativity and desire your desires become absorbed in the good. You get pleasure from it then it's what you live for. And that's what pulls you away from a wrong use of pleasure. Now of course it isn't just sex. I mean there are other things that young people get obsessed with. So that's what you do. It's like Paul said Philippians 4:8 that's in the Bible now. And here's Paul sitting in a Roman prison talking about well I know how to be a beast and I know how to you know I can do all things through Christ to strengthen with me.
how did he do that? He did it by practicing what he said whatsoever. Things are good whatsoever things are true. Lovely. Good report. And so now of course God is at the top of the list but a 14 year old kid may not be able to start there so you try to help them be absorbed in good things. You don't just say don't do that.

John Ko:
Right okay. You even get your question.

Dr. Willard:
I think we're gonna wear everyone out here. Thank you so much for coming.

[Applause]

John Ko:
We want to thank Dallas for being willing to address such a deep issue information. Those of you who have still not registered you still can or you can do that next week as well. But why don't we close in prayer.

Thank the Lord our Father we do bless you. We love you Lord. May you take these thoughts and by your spirit may you open places in our minds are heart of Father where to how to begin to open to you in these areas. A true vision of what a person is person in you persons created in your image thought Lord we asked you to grant grace to your people who have heard this tonight
Grand Grace to our brother Dr. William just all that you were doing in his heart so watch over us Lord and hear our prayers in Jesus name amen.